

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /015 R

DRAFTED BY ARA-LA/PAN:TFUNICELLO:LKB
APPROVED BY ARA-LA/PAN:RWYROUGH
-----092081 302001Z /40
P 301945Z JAN 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:PEPR, PN

SUBJECT:WEEKLY ACTIVITIES REPORT: JAN 23-27

A. FOLLOW-UP TO PREVIOUS REPORTS:

1. OMB MEMORANDUM ON THE CANAL COMMISSION: DEPARTMENT IS AWAITING OMB'S NEW DRAFT.
2. REPLY TO FAA. RESPONSE HAS BEEN COMPLETED. EMBASSY WILL BE PROVIDED A COPY AS SOON AS AMB. TODMAN SIGNS IT.
3. WHITMAN REPORT: DRAFT RESPONSE HAS BEEN COMPLETED AND CLEARED. EMBASSY WILL BE POUCHED A COPY OF THE FINAL.
4. HUMAN RIGHTS: UNCLASSIFIED REPORT WILL BE SUBMITTED TO CONGRESS WEEK OF JANUARY 30. EMBASSY HAS BEEN CABLED TEXT FOR RELEASE TO GOP PRIOR TO SUBMITTAL DATE. ARA/PAN

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WILL ALSO PROVIDE COPY TO PANAMANIAN EMBASSY HERE.

B. NEW ACTIVITIES

1. CONGRESS.

(A) SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE: EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED

A CABLE (STATE 020279) ON FIRST DAY'S HEARINGS. COMMITTEE WILL CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS WEEK OF JAN 30. ANTICIPATED WITNESSES INCLUDE: ADMIRAL MOORER ON JAN 31; GOVERNOR PARFITT AND ELMER STAATS, U.S. COMPTROLLER GENERAL ON FEB 1; AND ON FEB 2 THE AMERICAN MANAGEMENT SERVICES, A CONSULTANT FIRM WHICH THE COMMITTEE ENGAGED TO DO A STUDY ON THE TREATIES. WE BELIEVE THE FIRM HAS COMPLETED ITS REPORT AND THAT IT WILL BE RELEASED ON FEB 2. WE WILL POUCH A COPY TO THE EMBASSY.

(B) SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE: THE SFRC IS EXPECTED TO CONCLUDE ITS MARK-UP OF THE TREATIES AND REPORT THEM OUT ON MONDAY WITH A RECOMMENDATION FOR AN AMENDMENT AND AN UNDERSTANDING. (SEE SEPTTEL STATE 022852).

2. PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

(A) ALL MEDIA HAVE BEEN GIVING EXTENSIVE COVERAGE TO THE SFRC'S ACTIVITIES AND HAVE BEEN DWELLING AT LENGTH ON THE COOPERATIVE EFFORT OF SENATORS BYRD AND BAKER IN CONVINCING THE COMMITTEE TO PRESENT A "CLEAN" DRAFT OF THE TREATIES TO THE SENATE BODY TO PERMIT ALL THE SENATORS AN OPPORTUNITY TO PLAN AN INDIVIDUAL ROLE IN THE ANTICIPATED AMENDMENT EFFORTS

EVANS AND NOVAK IN FRIDAY'S WASHINGTON POST SPECULATE THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IF "PANAMA IS FORCED BY THE U.S. SENATE" TO RESUBMIT THE NEUTRALITY TREATY FOR ANOTHER PLEBISCITE, THE RESULT WOULD PROBABLY BE A "HUMILIATING DEFEAT" FOR THE TREATY AND GENERAL TORRIJOS. THE COLUMNISTS SAY THAT THE DEFEAT OF THE TREATY IN A SECOND PLEBISCITE WOULD "HINGE AS MUCH ON THE RISING UNPOPULARITY OF TORRIJOS AS ON THE HOSTILE BUT UNSTATED REACTION ELSEWHERE HERE (PANAMA) TO THE PARADE OF VISITING SENATORS TWISTING PANAMA'S ARM TO ACCEPT TREATY CHANGES. THESE CHANGES ARE PERCEIVED AS HUMILIATING."

SENATE DEBATE ON THE TREATIES WILL PROBABLY BEGIN THE FIRST WEEK OF FEB AND WILL NOT BE TELEVISED LIVE AS ORIGINALLY PLANNED BY SENATOR BYRD. THIS EARLIER THAN ANTICIPATED DATE WILL NOT GIVE TV TECHNICIANS ENOUGH TIME TO INSTALL PROPER LIGHTING. HOWEVER, THE DEBATE IS SCHEDULED TO BE BROADCAST ON RADIO.

(B) DURING THE WEEK, AMB. BUNKER AND DICK WYROUGH SPOKE IN DAYTON, ST. LOUIS AND DES MOINES. MEDIA COVERAGE WAS GOOD.

.. TREATY ANNUITY BOND MEETING.

ON JAN 26, THE LAWYERS REPRESENTING THE PANAMANIAN GOVT'S

FISCAL AGENTS FOR THE ANNUITY PAYMENTS, PRUDENTIAL INSURANCE AND CONNECTICUT GENERAL (TWO HOLDERS OF ONE OF THE BOND ISSUES) MET WITH MINISTER BARLETTA AT THE PANAMANIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON TO FORMULATE A PROCEDURE WHICH WOULD PROVIDE FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE MONEY PAID TO PANAMA UNDER THE NEW PANAMA CANAL TREATY TO AMORTIZE PANAMA'S THREE EXTERNAL BOND ISSUES. (SEE SEPTEL STATE 022934 FOR RESULTS.)

4. BARLETTA.

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MINISTER BARLETTA INITIATED THE INTER-AMERICAN SOCIETY'S SPRING LECTURE SERIES THURSDAY NIGHT BY SPEAKING BEFORE AN AUDIENCE OF APPROX. FIVE HUNDRED PEOPLE AT THE PAN-AMERICAN UNION BUILDING ON "THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE NEW PANAMA CANAL TREATY."

USING A SERIES OF SLIDES AND A POLISHED DELIVERY, BARLETTA SKILLFULLY OUTLINED GOP PLANS FOR INDUSTRIAL AND RESIDENTIAL EXPANSION IN THE PANAMA CITY AND COLON AREAS UTILIZING LAND AND FACILITIES NOW IN THE CANAL ZONE. HE MADE A POINT OF SAYING THAT MANY OF THE PROJECTS ALREADY HAD THEIR FINANCING SECURED.

HIS PRESENTATION WAS VERY WELL RECEIVED. DURING THE QUESTION PERIOD HE DEFTLY SIDE-STEPPED POLITICAL ISSUES AND DEALT STRICTLY WITHIN THE ECONOMIC REALM. VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE024204
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: LA/PAN:TFUNICELLO:LKB
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780044-0863
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978017/aaaaafkw.tel
Line Count: 152
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 603cfce3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3784032
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WEEKLY ACTIVITIES REPORT: JAN 23-27 A. FOLLOW-UP TO PREVIOUS REPORTS
TAGS: PEPR, PINT, PN
To: PANAMA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/603cfce3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014